

THE Nonconformist & MUSICAL * JOURNAL

A MONTHLY RECORD AND REVIEW

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF WORSHIP MUSIC IN THE NONCONFORMIST CHURCHES.

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NOVEMBER 1891.

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Psalmody at the Congregational Union.

IN June last we ventured to call the attention of the committees of the Congregational and Baptist Unions to the fact that the subject of church music had not been considered in their annual assemblies for a considerable number of years. Our remarks appear to have borne fruit quickly, for a very interesting discussion on Psalmody took place in September at the North London Baptist Association meetings, and also at Southport last month at the Congregational Union meetings. We are, indeed, glad that the leaders of both denominations were alive to the necessities of the case, and we have no doubt whatever that the churches will ultimately be benefited.

There was an excellent attendance at Southport, in spite of three other attractive meetings being held at the same time. Nor was there any lack of speakers, for there was not sufficient time for all who were ready to express their opinions. So far as we could gather, the general feeling was all on the side of a much fuller use of music being made in our services. It is the people who do not take that view that ought to have heard the discussion. Unfortunately, many of them do not

want to be converted to more enlightened ways, and so were absent. In fact, one minister expressed his thorough agreement with the papers that were read, but he said he could not convince his deacons of the necessity of having a good musical service, and he appealed to Mr. Minshall to go and read his paper to them and his church members, hoping that it may have the desired effect.

As the Rev. H. Storer Toms pointed out in his most interesting and useful paper, it is very difficult to know exactly what to do when we find in a church two sections, one musical and the other unmusical, and the one anxious to introduce into the service a due proportion of psalmody, and the other anxious to prevent such an introduction, either from a non-appreciation of music, or from a fear that it would endanger the spirituality of the service. In such a case there should be on both sides a willingness to concede something, in order to preserve peace and concord. Where this spirit of forbearance and compromise was absent, he failed to see how the question could be satisfactorily settled.

We have always advocated having, as far as possible, something for all sections in every service, thus, to some extent at least, satisfying all parties. From our own experience, and from information which reaches us from various quarters, we find that, as a rule, the opponents of a good musical service—more especially the older friends—are the ones lacking in toleration and charity. Where a mutual concession will solve the difficulty, the course is clear; but where the different sections will not loyally accept a compromise, the majority can hardly be accused of want of good feeling if they determine to have the entire musical service according to their own ideas.

The opponents of good music are daily growing fewer as musical culture is extending. Those who are working hard to improve our service of praise must not relax their efforts. Without a doubt ere long we shall have far better music in our churches; and, what is more, it will be appreciated by all who hear it.

MR. MINSHALL will lecture on "Congregational Psalmody" in Oldham on November 16th; Henley-on-Thames, November 25th; and at Bournemouth (date not finally fixed).

SOME of the Nottingham choirs have been thrown into a state of alarm in consequence of the Town Council having determined to compel the owners of all places in which concerts, etc., are held, and for which admission is charged, to take out licences. Chapels are thus liable for rates and taxes, which amount to a considerable sum. We understand that the authorities of at least one chapel have already taken out a licence rather than discontinue the concerts.

WE have often referred to the injurious habit some ministers have of giving the hymns to the organist immediately before the commencement

of service. A few Sundays ago at a chapel in London, there was almost a breakdown in the chant from this cause. The minister took it into his head to omit certain verses, but there was not time to instruct all the choir, the consequence being that some were singing the verses supposed to be omitted, while others had gone on. Ministers who have so little regard for correctness and decency in the singing are greatly to blame.

WE are glad to observe that several of the religious papers are now giving church music some special attention, which is a healthy sign of the times. *The Christian World* has always shown an interest in the subject, and repeatedly given articles on it; but a monthly column on "Gossip on Church Music" now appears. *The British Weekly* is fortunate in having two correspondents who furnish interesting articles. *The Independent* has recently followed suit, and a Mus. Bac. of of London University has undertaken to write critical notes.

HERE is a good and true story. An organist was wanted for a certain Presbyterian chapel not a hundred miles from London. A competition of some of the selected candidates was arranged, when, instead of calling in the assistance of some well-qualified organist to act as judge, the elders decided to undertake the duty themselves. Some hymns had to be accompanied, and the learned judges requested the church officer to bring them some copies of "Church Praise." Books without music were first supplied, but very naturally those were scorned by men who were about to adjudicate on a musical performance. The church officer therefore hastened to supply the music, and brought a stock of Old Notation and Sol-fa copies. On asking the elders which they would have, one wanted to know "which was which," and another wanted to know what was the difference between them! Yet these good men had the audacity to act as musical critics.

MUCH credit is due to some musical students of Mansfield College who have been giving a series of concerts in several large towns on behalf of the Canning Town Settlement. The performers, from all reports, are fully up to their work, and really excellent concerts were given. Mr. Alden, the warden of the settlement, accompanied the party, and gave the audience some information about the useful work being done. We understand that more than £100 was realised by the tour.

"It is an ill wind that blows no one any good." Owing to the sudden illness of Madame Albani, Miss Anna Williams was called upon to take the soprano music in the new works performed at the recent Birmingham Festival. Though she only had a few days in which to study her part, she acquitted herself thoroughly well, and thereby gained fresh honour as an oratorio singer. This is the advantage of being a musician instead of a mere vocalist. Young singers should study the

art in all its branches; then they would be equal to anything that may be demanded of them, and golden opportunities such as Miss Williams had at Birmingham would be heartily welcomed as stepping-stones to fame.

A LARGE portion of the programme of the last Nonconformist Choir Union Festival will be performed in the City Temple on Thursday, the 5th inst., at 7.30 p.m., in connection with the Thursday concerts. The chorus will consist of over three hundred voices, supported by some brass instruments. The vocalists will be Misses Emily Davies and Edith Hands; Messrs. Miles Mole and Alexander Tucker. Mr. J. R. Griffiths will preside at the organ, and Mr. Minshall will conduct. Admission: Area, One Shilling; Gallery, Sixpence. The proceeds to be given in aid of the church funds.

WE are glad to hear that Nonconformist Choir Unions are likely to be formed at Leicester and High Wycombe.

PROFESSOR RHYS, in an article on "Welsh Fairies," in the October number of the *Nineteenth Century*, has something to say on the shape of musical skulls. He says: "I should like to have seen the heads of some of the singers in the Eisteddfod the other day at Swansea placed under the hands of an experienced skullman, for I have long suspected that we cannot regard as of Aryan origin the vocal talent so general in Wales, and so conspicuous in our choirs as to astonish all the great musicians who have visited our national festival. Beyond all doubt race has not a little to do with the artistic feeling. A short skull may be as unmusical, for example, as I am; but has anybody ever known a' narrow, long skull to be the reverse of unmusical? or has any one ever reckoned how few fingers would suffice to count all the clergymen of the tall blue-eyed type who have been converted to the Ritualistic movement in the Church of England?"

Music in the Scottish Churches.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

DURING the holiday season, music in the Scottish churches is practically limited to the ordinary Sunday services; and organists, precentors, and choirs, if they do not altogether rest from their labours, do at any rate very little more than is actually necessary for the carrying out of their respective duties. Some complaints have this season been made in print regarding the capacities of organists' deputies during the holidays. It has been said that while the ministers generally leave efficient men in their places, the organists too frequently give their work over to the hands of inexperienced amateurs. But a comparison between the ministers and the organist is in this instance exceedingly unfair. The former not only draw their hundreds of pounds a year in salary, but when they go on holiday have the expenses of pulpit supply during their absence defrayed from the

church funds. The latter, on the other hand, have to provide substitutes at their own cost; and if we remember that the salaries of most organists in Scotland are under the three figures, we shall not be surprised to find that these substitutes have been provided at the lowest possible expense. Congregations, I fear, have not yet realised the need of the organist for a holiday; and yet in many cases he is a much harder-worked man than the minister, whose duties are not unfrequently limited to the preaching of the two regulation sermons weekly. In some of the city churches an excellent plan exists whereby a holiday is provided free of cost to all the church workers. Two neighbouring congregations agree to join for two months, generally August and September, one staff doing duty one month, the other the next. But for the petty jealousies of the sects, there is no reason why this plan should not be extended. In many of the city churches during the holiday season, it would take a combination of two or three congregations to make a decent assemblage, and it is simply a waste of men and means to keep the work of all the churches going in the ordinary way.

I had the good fortune to be present at a drawing-room meeting here, at which Mr. Stead unfolded his views as to the claims of social work on the members of the Christian churches. It does one real good to come under the spell of Mr. Stead's burning zeal and enthusiasm. Hearing him preach from the orthodox "text" on the previous Sunday evening, one was not so much impressed; but as he warmed up in the presence of that little company to his theme of the social regeneration of the masses, and the brightening of the lives of the poor, one realised the force of Cardinal Manning's advice to the inexperienced platform speaker: "Be full of your subject, and have an enthusiasm for it." Mr. Stead only incidentally referred to the power of music in drawing the masses within the influence of the churches. That power, I venture to think, is stronger than many excellent people suppose. Much was said at the meeting in question, chiefly by the ministers, of the power of preaching, of the value of repeating the "old, old story," and so on. But the masses are not to be attracted by the power of preaching. Here in Edinburgh—as I suppose elsewhere—many of the churches are but half-full at all the ordinary conventional preacher- and perhaps precentor-led services. But let the people know that there is to be no sermon, that in its place a selection of good music will be given, and we have the building crowded to overflowing. Is there, or is there not, a lesson here? And if there is, why should we not benefit by its teaching? I do not say that the sermon should be thrown overboard. But I think one sermon on Sunday is quite enough; and I think that one should also be much shorter than sermons now usually are. In the evenings let us have as much music as our organisations can command; let there be variety, brightness, enthusiasm, and there is no fear but we shall be able to attract the masses. The so-called Purists may say what they like, but the church which does nothing but preach the "old, old story," which does not take account of the social as well as the spiritual needs of the people, is a church whose power over the masses is doomed. To give expression to these views requires some temerity, but they are the views of one who, by moving a good deal among the people, has come to know something of their opinion of the churches, and of their antipathy to the old conventional forms of service. Scotland is at present, and has been, for some time, pestered by a clerical fanatic who, under the delusion that the improved architecture and furnishings of our churches, our better musical services, and our general replacement of the doggerel metrical psalter by "human hymns" are leading us straight to Popery, has started

a crusade against these dreadful "innovations." In reading this individual's tirades, I always recall George Eliot's advice to the clerical mediocrity of her day: "Let him preach less of Christ than of Antichrist; let him be less definite in showing what sin is than in showing who is the Man of Sin; less expansive on the blessedness of faith than on the accursedness of infidelity." I have just had sent to me his pamphlet on the new Scottish Hymnal, which, we are told, is "saturated with Popish error, superstition, and idolatry." I quote the opening sentence: "The following exposure of some of the Popish and heretical hymns found in the Scottish Hymnal are given only as examples, and ought to cause every member of the Church of Scotland to reject this book, and demand its instant condemnation." From this it will be seen that the reverend gentleman and Lindley Murray are slightly at variance. The amount of nonsense in the pamphlet is simply incredible as coming from the hand of a presumably educated person. It is an offence that any hymn, however good, by a Roman Catholic writer—even by a Newman—should have found admittance to a Presbyterian Church collection; while, of course, the name of the Virgin is as the red rag to the bull. Our Lord is spoken of as being "impiously invoked" in the refrain of Milman's beautiful hymn, "Jesu, Son of Mary, hear." Mary, we are told, was "only an instrument in the birth of our Lord's human, not Divine, nature." But is there, then, any objection to an expression of the great truth of our Lord's humanity? Fault is also found with—

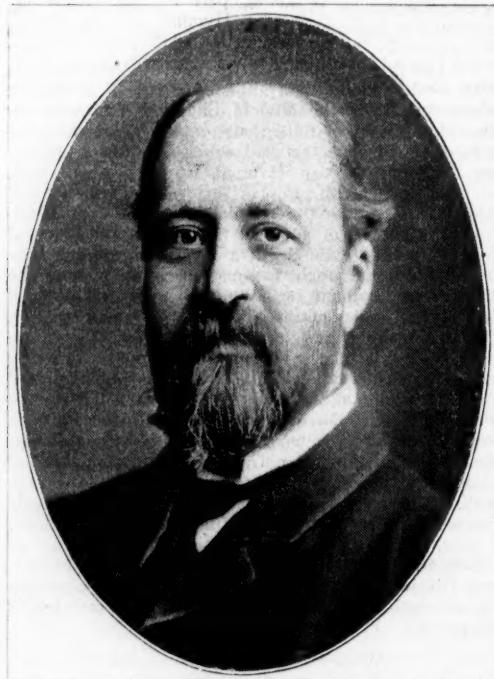
"When the solemn death-bell tolls
For our own departing souls"—

on the ground that this "makes all who sing it anticipate the hangman's rope, as it is only at the public execution of murderers that the death-bell tolls"! This is an objection which should, however, be answered by the Hymnal editors, for Milman wrote "departed," not "departing." There may be people who accept such bigoted narrowness as holy zeal, such unctuous egoism as God-given piety; but I am glad to say not many such are to be found in Scotland. Most educated people are delighted with the improved and improving music of our churches; and as for the metrical psalms, we can do as well without them as our forefathers did before the days of Knox. There is no more "inspiration" about their doggerel than there is in Walt Whitman; and there are not more than two dozen out of the entire hundred and fifty which satisfy even a moderate poetical taste.

In this connection, by the way, I note the discovery of a really orthodox Churchman. At the recent Communion services at a Free Church mission in Skye, a speaker from Portree is alleged to have condemned as "graceless" those who sing hymns in public worship and countenance choirs. He declared that there was false teaching in the south and in the north, and that the majority in the Church were following false brethren. However, I am glad to be able to say that the speaker in question was humble enough to confess that he could not read! It is evident that if false teaching is abroad so also is the schoolmaster.

J. CUTHBERT HADDEN.

A very interesting paper appears in *The Sunday at Home* for November from the pen of Mr. Spencer Curwen, giving an account of the musical service at St. James's Church Holloway, of which the Rev. E. A. Stuart is incumbent. There is no choir at all, but the congregation sing vigorously and heartily. As may be presumed, the service is plain, and the singing is mostly unison. Nevertheless, it is inspiring and touches the hearts of the people.



Music at Finsbury Park Wesleyan Chapel.

ON a hot, bright Sunday morning in September I visited Finsbury Park Wesleyan Chapel. The chapel faces the gate of the park, and is an unpretending structure so far as the exterior is concerned, brightly and warmly decorated within. Three sides have spacious galleries; the end opposite the entrance doors is occupied by the organ, a good instrument built by Brindley & Foster, of Sheffield. It has three manuals and between thirty and forty stops, and the reeds are of particularly good quality. The choir-seats are placed in a small gallery behind the organ-stool, and at the corners of the side galleries; and I was pleased to note that the singers were provided with those convenient book-rails which are coming so much into fashion. They enable the singers to stand upright as they sing, and save the binding of the books.

It will, perhaps, clear the way if I say that I am not a Wesleyan, and have not often attended Wesleyan services; but the denomination has an enviable reputation for full-voiced, hearty singing, which had given me a favourable bias; I had also the expectation of hearing the service of the Anglican Church. But it appeared that Finsbury Park Chapel differs from some of its fellows in this particular; perhaps with no detriment. At one Wesleyan chapel I attended not long since, the Church Service was used—and abused; the responses and psalms were gabbled in the most perfunctory manner, and the conviction was brought home forcibly to my mind that, if a liturgy is adopted, the only security for preserving

decency and order is the adoption also of the monotone.

The musical service at Finsbury is extremely, one might almost say excessively, plain. It consisted solely of five hymns, from the edition of Wesley's hymns issued under the musical direction of Dr. Mann, of Cambridge, who has included, to judge by those I heard, tunes both ancient and modern. The book is not familiar to me, and unluckily I had only a copy of the words, so that in reference to the tunes I am not in a position to say much. The hymns were: "Soldiers of Christ, arise!" to a stately tune of Dr. Gauntlett's; "Worship and thanks and blessing," a hymn of most remarkable metre, necessitating a remarkable tune which appeared to me exceedingly difficult; "Oft in danger, oft in woe," to a tune by Dr. H. J. Leslie; "Safe in the fiery furnace"; and "Watched by the world's malignant eye," this last being sung to Barnby's splendid tune known in the Congregational Hymnal as *St. Chrysostom*. It will be seen from the titles of these hymns that a most militant and "robustuous" spirit pervaded the service, and it will not be regarded as unfriendly if I say that it seemed eminently to suit the choir and congregation. The former consisted of some twenty-five ladies and gentlemen, among whom each part was well represented. The sopranos sang very clearly, and the high notes in the second tune were taken with ease. The tenors also made the most of their interesting phrases in the last tune. I was informed that several members of the choir were still holiday-making; but the choir as I heard it was quite strong enough, and I may add efficient.

The congregation was a large one, and entered very heartily into the music, many using tune-books. The number of young men and women present was particularly large.

With reference to the style of singing, not much can be said from this one service either in praise or blame. To begin with, the hymns were all so much alike that there was no opportunity of judging of the power of the choir to sing with expression. Out of the four eight-line verses of the first hymn, and I think six eight-line verses of the second hymn, there was not a line that needed soft singing; and I have to content myself with saying that in fire and volume, or, to use again Shakspere's word, "robustuousness," nothing was lacking. But a hymn of fifty lines all marked *forte* is a little monotonous.

The organist and able choirmaster is Mr. C. J. Dale, whose likeness we give herewith, and who received me very courteously. Mr. Dale is a strong Methodist and an active worker in the Church. He is well known as the conductor of the Finsbury Choral Association, and under his wise and careful management the society is in a most flourishing state, and is doing excellent work in the north of London. Mr. Dale is likewise Principal of the Metropolitan College of Music. His opening voluntary was an *adagio* from one of Haydn's symphonies, his closing voluntary an arrangement from an anthem of Stainer's. In keeping with the whole service, Mr. Dale's accom-

paniment was plain ; he seemed vigorously to eschew those fanciful embellishments which modern organists are partial to, and which good people in the congregations accuse of " putting them out." The reed stops, as mentioned above, are good ; but perhaps Mr. Dale might lessen the monotony of a long hymn by using them a little less frequently. His method of " giving out " the tunes raises a question which I have heard organists discuss with animation. In every instance but one, Mr. Dale played over the tune all four parts on the swell organ. *Quot homines, tot sententiae* ; but as much variety as the organ is capable of in this respect is, I think, advisable. I have heard raised as an objection against playing the soprano part as a solo, that all the parts of a tune are, or should be, equally important. But the object of playing a tune over is to enable the congregation to be in readiness to sing the hymn ; and for a congregation the treble part is distinctly the most important.* Besides, it is in such apparently little things as the giving out of tunes that an organist has opportunity for the exercise of taste and the expression of feeling. The " playing over " may itself be made a means of inspiration to the congregation. And, lastly, variety in this respect enables a congregation to know their own organ,—which they would never do if listening to voluntaries were the only way.

In conclusion, it may be confidently affirmed that both choir and congregation are capable of rendering a service richer in the graces of music. Anthems are indeed sung on special occasions ; but there seems no reason why such simple anthems as are now issued might not be regularly used. I have heard a congregation of country people sing, with thorough enjoyment, Woodward's anthem "The radiant morn." Mr. Dale himself is anxious to impart more variety to the musical service ; but out of respect to the wishes of some of the older friends he does not press the matter.

"Psalmody" at the Congregational Union Meetings.

AT a Sectional Meeting, held on the 14th ult., at Southport, in connection with the autumnal gathering of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, "Psalmody" was the subject for consideration. Mr. Alfred T. Shepheard presided. The Rev. R. M. Davies, of Oldham, open the proceedings with prayer.

The CHAIRMAN said the question they were met to consider was one which some would call a question of detail connected with Congregational Church life. He rather differed from that idea. If they were going to consider simply a question of how they could attract some into their places of worship who would not come except by the attraction of music, or how they could make their services more interesting by introducing music to them of a better kind, they might call it a question of detail. But was not music in our church psalmody a part of our worship ? and what was worship but the attitude of the soul to God ? He was speaking in the presence of those who could be touched by music, and they would agree that they had never been brought to a sense of the difference between themselves and God more than by the hearing of a pathetic and

religious song, or by taking part in some of those litanies to be found in the Hymnal, singing them, as was done in his church, on their knees before God. On the other hand, they never experienced a higher feeling of exultation than when touched by some exulting strain of music, and so brought direct into the presence of God. The question was a very important one, and the time spent over it would be thoroughly well bestowed.

Rev. H. STORER TOMS (Enfield) read a paper, of which the following is the substance :—

"By psalmody I understand the musical part of public worship. That music has a legitimate place in the worship of God needs no proof. But although it is almost universally admitted that public worship should include music, there are great differences of opinion amongst Christian people as to the methods and extent of its use. It is not difficult to see how these originate. In the first place, they spring from those original differences of constitution which characterise mankind, and for which we are in no way responsible. While there are people who are born without any ear for music, there are others who possess a 'soul for music,' and to them harmonious sounds are what the sunlight, with all its marvellous and spirit-stirring effects of colour, is to those who have eyes to see. Between these two extreme points there are innumerable grades of musical faculty and appreciation. Where such natural diversities exist, it is not surprising that there should exist also differences of opinion with respect to the psalmody of public worship. It is impossible but that such differences should come.

"In the next place, there are diversities of knowledge and culture by which the judgment will be influenced. The 'gift' of the musical faculty is bestowed, like other gifts, in the rough. It needs development and cultivation. The trained eye perceives subtle refinements of beauty which are wholly hidden from the untrained, and the trained ear is equally quick to discern beauty to which the untrained ear is deaf ; and so it comes to pass that what is delightful and desirable to one may be painful and offensive to another. In the same congregation you will probably find some members who derive unspeakable pleasure from the lofty strains of Handel and Mendelssohn and Mozart, but are offended and irritated by the sacred songs and solos of Sankey ; and *vice versa*, some who regard the tunes in Sankey's collection and other similar productions as heaven-born melodies full of beauty and inspiration, but to whom the works of the great masters appear uninteresting and unattractive, if not positively offensive. This is the necessary result of the possession and non-possession of musical education. Differences of taste and judgment *must*, therefore, exist. How are such differences to be dealt with ?

"HOW TO MEET DIFFERENCES OF TASTE."

"I wish very briefly to point out the direction in which, according to my judgment, the answer to this very practical question will be found. It is quite unnecessary to remind ourselves that as Congregational churches—and throughout this paper it is the Congregational churches that I have in view—we possess the most perfect liberty in the ordering of our public worship. If we are wise we shall adjust our methods, including the forms of worship, to the knowledge and culture and taste of those who constitute our congregations. An illiterate population will not be attracted or edified by the kind of service which to educated and refined people is acceptable and profitable. I fear that a good deal of mischief has resulted from the neglect of a principle so obvious. But this liberty of the Church has certain limits. I will mention two. It must be used to edification. The psalmody of the Church must be appropriate to the purpose of worship. With what

object is psalmody employed? Why are words of adoration and praise, thanksgiving and confession, prayer and intercession, uttered musically, and with musical accompaniment, instead of with the speaking voice? It surely is not that God may be propitiated or gratified by the sweet and harmonious sounds of singing and playing. The true use of psalmody consists in providing the forms in which the spiritual life may express itself. It serves its purpose just in proportion as it assists us in our endeavours to worship God in spirit and in truth. Words, however poetic, and music, however perfect, if they fail here, fail in the one essential element. God is well pleased with our psalmody when it is an altar on which we offer spiritual sacrifices. The choice of psalmody must, therefore, be determined not by the artistic merits of the music, or by its popularity, but by its fitness to help the soul in its upward flight to that exalted sphere in which it can hold communion with its unseen and eternal Father.

"Our liberty is limited further by charity. Where there are in a church two sections, a musical and an unmusical, the one anxious to introduce into the service a larger proportion of psalmody, and the other just as anxious to prevent all such innovations—either from their want of appreciation of music, or from the fear they entertain that its wider use would endanger the spirituality of the Church—there surely should be on both sides a willingness to concede something in order to discover a *via media* in which all may walk together in peace and concord. Where this spirit of charity prevails, it ought not to be difficult to agree upon an order of service in which all may happily and heartily unite; but where it is absent, I do not see how the very difficult matter of the psalmody is to be satisfactorily arranged. Our motto in this respect, as in all others, must be, 'Let all things be done unto edifying, and in love.' The harmony of spirit is vastly more important than the harmony of voices.

"PSALMODY AS A MEANS OF ATTRACTION.

"It may be well, at this point, to consider for a moment how far psalmody may be employed by our churches as a means of attracting the non-worshipping population. I refer rather to special services than to ordinary ones. Is it right to use music in order to attract to the house of God those who would come simply for the sake of the music? I believe it is. Mr. Moody's experience, if there were no other, has proved that grand results may be attained by this means. I was at a meeting the other evening at a church where in less than three months the Sunday evening congregation has increased from one hundred and fifty to over six hundred, and this change is attributed very largely to the introduction into the service of special musical features. To the people thus attracted the Gospel has been earnestly and faithfully preached, with very encouraging results. The details of such services must be left, of course, to the Christian good sense and good taste of the minister, who is always responsible for the order of worship. Much will depend upon the character of the neighbourhood, the capacity of the choir and choir-leader and organist, and the musical talent available. But whatever the programme may be, all who take part in the service should have in mind the distinctive mission of the Church—the bringing of men to the faith and obedience of Jesus Christ. If we 'become all things to all men,' it should be with the object of 'gaining some.' Our churches, with few exceptions, have not yet realised the value of the instrument which lies to their hand in sacred music. Our cultured members should be willing and glad to employ their voices in attracting the careless and godless to the house of God, and in lending power and emphasis to the message of God's infinite love. I know that many pious and excellent people entertain a strong objection to such

innovations on old-established customs. Their feelings, and even their prejudices, are to be respected; but I am convinced that, all unwittingly, they frequently hinder the expansion of the Church's influence and prevent the accomplishment of much real good. Having thus very imperfectly laid down these principles, I will refer, in a few words, to one or two.

"DETAILS OF PRACTICE.

"The psalmody of an ideal non-liturgical service would, according to my idea, include a *sanctus*, a chant, two or three hymns, and, where practicable, an anthem. The singing would be led by a sufficiently large and well-trained choir, and would be accompanied by an organ of good quality, well played. An anthem should be introduced when it can be suitably sung. A musical congregation may very properly and profitably unite with the choir in singing it. When the people are unmusical, the anthem, if it is to be anything worthy of the name, should be sung by the choir alone, or it should not be attempted. And even in churches where the congregation is capable of taking part in an ordinary anthem, I would occasionally give opportunities for the choir to sing alone music which would be unsuitable for the congregation to join in. On such occasions, however, the people should be provided with the words, and should stand during the singing, regarding it not as a 'performance' of the choir simply to be listened to, but as an act of solemn worship, in which they are silently but sincerely to take part. To make it a true help to devotion, music sung by the choir alone must be sung sufficiently well not to invite criticism. No one can criticise the *form* of worship, and use it as a medium of the *spirit* at the same time. I would insist on choirs being well trained. They must not think that 'anything will do.' The members of a choir should enter upon their office with seriousness and earnestness. They should regard their service as a labour of love rendered, not to man, but to God, and should seek the honour that cometh from God only. They should look upon the meetings for training and practice as solemn engagements, which nothing but very important reasons would justify them in breaking. No choir, however clever and capable its constituent members may be, can do its work satisfactorily without careful and pains-taking preparation; and an inefficient choir is worse than none—it is a hindrance, rather than a help, to a working congregation. So is a choir lacking in devout and reverent behaviour. It is very painful to see those who should be the leaders in the Church's worship setting an example of irreverence. Because certain persons occupy particular seats, and take part in the service as leaders of the psalmody, they are not thereby released from the obligation to behave reverently, which the congregation generally regard as binding upon them. They are a part of the congregation, and should act accordingly. It is

"A GREAT MISTAKE

for the choir to face the congregation. The 'singing gallery' behind the pulpit is an invention of the wicked one to distract the attention of the people, lest they should hear and be converted and saved. We frequently go wrong in planning our churches. Ignoring the Christian practice for eighteen centuries and more, we assign to the organ and choir, instead of the Lord's table, the most prominent position in the building, as though it were a concert-hall. This has had something to do with that lack of outward reverence with which Nonconformist worship is frequently and only too justly charged. I strongly advocate the assembling of the choir before public worship commences, in order to seek the grace and strength they need for their sacred ministry. After prayer they should in a quiet and orderly manner proceed to their places in the church.

POPULAR ANTHEMS FOR CHURCH USE NO. 3.

“HOLIEST! BREATHE AN EVENING BLESSING.”

Composed by

FRANK MAITLAND.

Published at 44 Fleet Street, London, E.C.

Price 1½d

Con moto moderato. ($\text{d} = 72$)

ORGAN.

Contralto solo.

Ho - liest!

breathe an ev' - ning... bless - ing Ere re - pose our

spir - its... seal; Sin and want we come con -

fess - ing, Thou canst save, and thou canst heal.

mp dolce

pp

cresc. e string.

slargando

Tempo

cresc.

Tenors and Basses
in unison.

Though des - - truc - - tion walk a - -

round us, Though the ar - row past us fly.

Organ with voices in harmony.

An - gel..... guards from thee sur - - round us;

We are safe, if thou art nigh, We are

Tempo primo.
Organ. pp

safe if thou art nigh.

safe if thou art nigh.

No Pedals.

Solo.

dolce e **p****pp**

16 ft.

can - not.... hide.... from thee; Thou art....

he, who, nev - er.... wea - ry, Watch - est.... where thy....

peo - pie be.

Organ and voices.

pp Should swift death this..... night o'er - - take us,

And our couch be - - come our *cresc.* tomb,.....

e marcato *molto al* *ff* May the morn in heaven a - - wake us, Clad in.....

light and death-less bloom. *mp* A - - - men,.....

A - - - men,..... *pp* A - - - men,..... *ppp* A - - - men.



"The choir exists not to supersede the singing of the congregation, but to evoke and lead it. This must be borne in view in selecting the music, which should be such as an ordinary congregation will be able and pleased to join in. Unfortunately tunes have been inserted in our new Church Hymnal without reference to their suitability for congregational singing. They are painfully scientific and accurate in construction, but unimpressive, unattractive, and lacking in inspiration. They never can become popular. We must hope that in a revised edition their places may be occupied by more pleasing and appropriate productions. Meanwhile we must do the best we can with the good tunes, of which, happily, there are a great many.

"The congregation requires training as well as the choir. In many churches congregational psalmody practices are unknown. A weekly psalmody practice should be an institution in every church, and an occasional meeting after the Sunday evening service, at which some guidance might be given to the congregation generally in the matter of singing, would prove exceedingly useful, and would be highly appreciated. The effect of proper attention being given to congregational psalmody would be seen not only in the greater interest taken in the Sunday services, but also in the greater good derived from them.

"The work of training choir and congregation affords a sphere of labour for the most talented and best educated of our musical members. I know, from my own happy experience, what invaluable service may be rendered to a church by the precentorship of a Christian gentleman, an excellent musician, whose whole heart is in the work, and who begrudges no effort or sacrifice to secure its success. Why should not those who are capable of acting in this capacity offer themselves for so excellent a ministry?

"A DEFECT IN OUR COLLEGES.

"In conclusion, I plead for a more earnest and enlightened consideration of the subject of psalmody on the part of our churches. Is it not a strange thing that in the curriculum of our theological colleges no place should be found for 'liturgies'? Men are sent into the ministry without having received any instructions whatever in such important matters as church psalmody, church prayer, the ordering of worship, the administration of the Sacraments, the conduct of church meetings and prayer meetings, marriages and burials. Every pastor should have at least so much knowledge of music as would enable him to wisely regulate the 'service of song in the house of the Lord.' Were this the case many of the dissensions which now arise in our churches, with all their evil consequences, would be averted, and a source of marvellous power for usefulness would remain no longer neglected.

"Lange says: 'The Old Testament congregation could offer to the Lord only creatures without fault or blemish; with regard to the "calves of the lips" which the New Testament congregation offers, this law appears at present in many congregations to be not so very scrupulously observed.' I fear that there is too good ground for the charge. We are content to offer to God that which costs us nothing—to take no pains to employ to the best advantage that gift by the use of which He has made it possible for us to come into very blessed communion with each other and with Himself. And the effect is seen in the lack of spiritual fervour and energy that too often characterises our services. In thus dwelling upon the importance of psalmody, I do not underrate the value of preaching and prayer and the reading of the Scriptures. Music, however excellent and appropriate, can never take the place of these, nor compensate for the want of true piety and ability, earnestness and zeal, in the minister. Still less can it enable us to dispense with the presence and power of

the Holy Spirit, through whose gracious agency alone our worship can be acceptable to God or profitable to men."

Mr. E. MINSHALL then read a paper on "Music as an Aid to Worship," which for want of space we must hold over till next month. He advocated the people taking a larger part audibly in the service, and indicated several ways in which this could be done. The musical service should be made more attractive, and in other ways altered to suit the more cultured taste of the present day, otherwise the congregations would go down. He also offered some suggestions for improving congregational singing.

Rev. G. S. BARRETT (Norwich) said it was usually noticed that many Congregationalists who were amongst the most extreme radicals in politics generally made up for it by becoming most conservative in ecclesiastical matters. He supposed it was by way of compensation. But when Mr. Shepheard said that he had so enjoyed some of the litanies sung kneeling, a little scene occurred to his mind, which happened not very many weeks ago, in which a minister proposed to one of his deacons that they should sing one of these very litanies kneeling, and was met with the astonished exclamation, "Whatever next will you expect us to do on Sunday?" The fact was, their friends who now were so frightened at chants and anthems and litanies, and a more rich and ornate service, forgot that the same fear was expressed when Dr. Watts's hymns were sung, and when tunes other than the old Sternholz and Hopkins tunes were introduced. It was well, therefore, to cherish, as Mr. Toms had so admirably said in his paper, kindly spirit of tolerance for each other. Mr. Toms had alluded to the Church Hymnal, of which he (Mr. Barrett) was editor. It was quite true that there were some bad tunes in that, but they could not find a tune-book anywhere in which there were not some bad tunes. He learnt a great many things in the six years' work of editing that book. They would not find a bad tune in the Mission Hymnal, and he did not think they would find a bad tune in the Children's Book, published a few weeks ago. But editors were sometimes driven to their wits' end to know what to do. The hymn might be glorious, but it might be of so crabbed and peculiar a metre that they could not find a tune to suit the hymn. It was then necessary to have a tune composed for it, and for some of the hymns in the hymnal he had no less than six tunes composed by some of the greatest composers, before he could get one which seemed worthy of being sung. That was one reason why some of those tunes existed in the hymnal; but considering that the book contained 750 hymns, and the largest number of tunes of any hymnal in existence, he thought organists and choir-masters would agree, that on the whole it contained less of dead matter than any book that had been published in this country. They had, continued Mr. Barrett, never yet used music to the full in the service of God and the salvation of souls as it might be used. He should never forget a few Sunday evenings since worshipping at the City Temple. The service commenced with singing the Confession, and from beginning to end was one of the most remarkable religious services that he had ever attended, and reflected the greatest credit on Mr. Minshall and the choir. What was wanted after all was to remember that though spirit counts for everything in God's sight it does not count for everything with men. Form was as necessary as spirit, and the more they could combine in their Sunday worship that true spirit of worship which alone is acceptable to God, and give to that spirit beauty and richness of form, the more they would have worship which would be profitable to the people, which would help the minister to preach, and would make the Gospel a new power to those that heard it.

Rev. W. HEWGILL, M.A., related how gradually they had learned by experience. Twenty-six years ago the church of which he was pastor had a great horror even of a chant, and up to within a few months of his taking the pastorate the service consisted entirely of three hymns, with occasionally a short anthem out of the Weigh House Book. He had now, by patient persistence, managed to secure in his church what he considered a satisfactory condition of psalmody. They frequently had solos, more particularly in connection with a monthly service of song, on some particular subject, and drawn entirely from the hymnal. The hymns were sung either as solos, or partly solos and partly chorus, interspersed with anthems and chants. Those services had been most impressive and attractive. No doubt there was great scope in that direction for improving the psalmody and the attractiveness of their worship. He had heard nothing but indications of good derived from such services as these.

Mr. CLEMENT WOODALL advocated the training of boys to sing in the choir, by which means a very marked improvement would be produced in congregational singing. He also recommended that members of the congregation should have hymnals at home, and practise the hymns during the week with their families. The result would be found very beneficial.

Rev. A. DUFFIL (Stoke Newington) hoped Mr. Minister would pay a visit to Whitfield's Tabernacle, and read his paper there. A short time ago he had introduced a band into the afternoon service, and as a result one of the prominent Baptist ministers in London had committed him somewhere, and washed his hands of him for having a band in his chapel at all. He was perfectly convinced that they were not doing all that might be done for church psalmody, even in his part of London. He had tried to persuade his deacons to do something more in this direction; but one of the old ones, who was as conservative as he was fifty or sixty years ago, said singing was not the Gospel. If what they had heard that afternoon were true, and singing was all that they had been told it was, his deacon must be somewhat behind the times. He wished that his church members and church officers could have heard Mr. Marshall's paper. If they did not keep pace with the times, Whitfield's Tabernacle would be simply annihilated.

Mr. CONNOR, who said he was connected with Cavendish Chapel, Manchester, expressed his dissent from Mr. Toms' opinion that placing the singers behind the pulpit was the invention of the wicked one. He thought singers behind the pulpit were in the right place.

Mr. WHEEN, who said he had come forty miles to hear this paper, believed the greatest hindrance to progress in the singing in their churches were the ministers themselves. He had been choirmaster for twenty years, and it was astonishing to find the number of ministers who came and said, "I am so fond of music, but you know I do not know anything at all about it." During two years that his church was without a settled pastor he had an opportunity of observing how many ministers in the pulpit joined in the singing and how many did not. A man often stood up and said, "Let us sing, to the praise and glory of God, hymn number so-and-so," and then sat down and began to look over a lot of papers. This had a bad effect, especially upon the young people. He believed that the want of progress in congregational singing, and the want of sympathy and spiritual benefit to be derived from it, was due in great measure to this want of sympathy and knowledge on the part of the minister.

A DELEGATE wished to have both organist and choir brought under the strictest government of the Church. No alteration should be made, or suggestion carried into effect, until it had been discussed and allowed at the church meeting. That was Congregationalism. They would not get their choirs into order, and what

was more, they would not get their congregations trained as they might otherwise be trained, until that important part of Congregationalism in relation to the conduct of public worship was recognised. The minister should realise that the proper place for talking about things was not the deacons' meeting, but the church meeting.

Rev. H. W. TURNER proposed, and Mr. LEE seconded, that the papers should be published in pamphlet form and circulated by the Union. This was carried unanimously, and the meeting closed.

Music at the Church Congress.

An afternoon was devoted to the subject of Church Music at the recent congress at Rhyl. A large choir had been got together, and their singing was greatly appreciated by an audience which crowded the hall to its utmost capacity.

Papers were read by several gentlemen, including the Rev. C. Hylton Stewart, who for many years was precentor of Chester Cathedral. In the course of his very practical remarks he said the subject was well worn, and one as to which it was impossible to lay down rules, because of the idiosyncrasies of individual clergymen and organists. His paper dealt with one or two points which, if adopted, would, he thought, promote congregational singing, while tending to maintain the dignity and devotion which, on the whole, are the characteristics of the Anglican service. While acknowledging the wisdom of the Church in utilising art of every kind, in the speaker's opinion much of the present vitality of the Church was to be ascribed to the art of music. The words of her liturgy seem naturally wedded to it, and her buildings to help the solemn effect produced by its use. The sleep-inducing dirge of parson and clerk has given way before the hearty voice of praise and thanksgiving which attracts crowded congregations to our cathedrals and churches. A varied experience led the speaker to the conclusion that excess in ornate music for the parish church (for which the type of worship is distinct from that of the cathedral), or the adapting unsuitable and inferior music to our liturgy, was equally to be avoided. There was a turning up of the nose at our grand school of music, the pride of the Anglican Church. There was a side to this revolution which, as receiving support from church dignitaries, calls for notice, and that was the cry for congregational singing. Except in one or two cases this was uncalled for, and, speaking generally, it was a fact that the congregational singing of the English Church was one of its strongest points. Our store of church music, begun by old "cathedral masters," and constantly added to by our modern church composers, was sufficient for the devout and intelligent rendering of our services; and why should we cut ourselves adrift from all that is historic in matters musical, as we were asked by some to do? Standing there as an advocate for congregational singing, the speaker would not wish it attained at the expense of the contemplative in music, thereby losing touch of that subtle power with which God has invested music, that "something" which takes us out of ourselves and "brings all heaven before our eyes." This, to the right-minded, was not the sensuous; and to those who used it rightly the glory of music of the Anglican Church is the absence of the sensuous and the presence of that which is helpful. In the arrangement of services the first matter to be thought of was the honour of God, and the elevating of the souls of the people; then came the duty of considering whether the music was such that the musical members of the congregation could join in it. The unmusical contingent would join in the singing in any case, and had

a perfect right to do so, but it is no use to cater for them. Music, except as an aid to worship, was valueless; and those who would revolutionise our church music would do well to pause, lest in reducing Music to the level of human requirements they dethrone her from her high estate. New societies were not needed, but what was wanted was a better use of what we had. Want of common sense in the selection and devout and intelligent interpretation were at the root of failure when it existed in congregational singing and devotional worship. Mr. Stewart recommended the formation of an association of parochial choirs in every diocese, bringing choirs into touch with the cathedral organist and precentor, and having periodical festivals. He thought in training colleges, besides the art of music, the principles of church music should be taught, in order to fit the schoolmaster-organist, on whom so many have to depend, for his work. Ladies usefully supplemented boys' voices. He recommended the presence of clergymen at practices and friendly intercourse with choirs, the adult members of which should be communicants.

Nonconformist Choir Union.

PRIZE ANTHEM COMPETITION.

FIFTEEN anthems were sent to the Secretary in competition for the prize of five guineas. These were submitted to the judgment of Mr. H. C. Banister, Professor of Harmony at the Royal Academy of Music. The following is his award:—

"October 19th, 1891.

"DEAR SIR,—After careful consideration, my judgment concerning the fifteen anthems submitted to me by the Nonconformist Choir Union is that the anthem, 'I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength,' bearing the motto *Lancastrian*, is the best composition. I presume that the middle movement being headed 'verse or semi-chorus' does not infringe the conditions; and on this assumption I award the prize to this composition, although it would considerably test a congregation for church use. In that one respect the anthem 'Oh, praise God in His holiness,' with the motto *Spes est unica fides*, is noticeable, and deserves honourable mention; it consists of only one movement. The anthem 'Praise ye the Lord,' motto *Spero*, is creditable.

"I remain, yours faithfully,

"HENRY CHARLES BANISTER.

"T. R. Croger, Esq."

Lancastrian is

MR. MATTHEW KINGSTON,

BOURNEMOUTH.

Spes est unica fides is Mr. F. H. Hattersley, of Tunbridge Wells; and *Spero* is Mr. W. Wright, of Nottingham.

At a committee meeting of the Union, held on the 19th ult., the arrangements for next year's Festival were discussed, and a small sub-committee formed to select the music to be performed. It was also resolved to try and arrange for a Church Festival, to be held, if possible, at the City Temple about the end of January or beginning of February 1892.

Echoes from the Churches.

(Paragraphs for this column should reach us by the 20th of the month.)

METROPOLITAN.

BETHNAL GREEN.—The Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held in the Congregational Church on

Sunday and Monday, September 27th and 28th, and were attended by large congregations. The anthems included, "O Lord, how manifold" (Barnby), "Ye shall dwell in the land" (Stainer), and "Hallelujah (Mount of Olives) (Beethoven). Organ recitals were given by the organist, Mr. H. W. Dunkley, whose programme included the following: "To Thee, Cherubim" (Handel), "Lost Chord" (Sullivan), "March in F" (Wallis), "La Serenata" (Braga), "Hallelujah" (Handel), "Inauguration March" (Clark), "Jerusalem" (Parker), "He shall feed His flock" (Handel). Miss Eliza Hopkins was the vocalist.

BROMLEY, KENT.—On Sunday, September 27th, Harvest Festival Services were held in the Congregational Church, and the decorations were more elaborate than any which have hitherto graced this place of worship. The musical portion of the service was particularly good, the choir being specially augmented for the occasion, and numbering about one hundred and twenty voices. The new choirmaster, Mr. F. S. Oram, had taken great pains by many private practices to raise the choir to the highest standard of efficiency, and the result was most marked. After the Benediction at the evening service had been pronounced, the musical portion of the service was extended, Mr. Sharland presiding at the organ—the entire service lasting over two hours—but not a single person left the church. In the afternoon the church was crowded with children and young people, when under Mr. Medwin's care the children sang an anthem from Cowen's sacred cantata, *Under the Palms*. In the morning the Rev. R. Lovell preached from the words, "The inhabitants of the villages ceased in Israel until, I, Deborah, arose"; and in the evening from the words, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

CITY.—Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held in the City Temple on the 18th ult., when the spacious building was densely crowded. At the evening service more than a thousand persons had to be turned away from the doors. The platform was one mass of fruit and flowers, and the front of the gallery was most tastefully decorated. Besides special hymns, the anthems "O Lord, how manifold" (Barnby) and "Sing unto the Lord" (Sydenham) were well rendered by the choir. Mrs. Parker and Miss Ada Rose sang "O lovely peace," and Madame Barter gave a careful rendering of "With verdure clad." At the close of the evening service "God is a Spirit" was admirably played by the four brass instrumentalists.

KENTISH TOWN.—The Harvest Thanksgiving Services at the Kentish Town Congregational Church were held on Sunday, the 4th ult. In addition to the usual thanksgiving hymns, the anthem in the morning was a very effective one by the Rev. A. V. Hall, "Praise, O praise, our God and King," and Smart's "Te Deum in F" was also sung. In the evening the anthems were Garrett's "Jubilate," Barnby's "O Lord, how manifold," and Sydenham's "O give thanks," and during the offertory Handel's duet "O lovely peace" was charmingly rendered by Miss Emily Davies and Mrs. A. J. Hawkins. The singing of the choir (which was augmented for the occasion, and numbered nearly sixty voices) was clear and crisp, and the attack was exceptionally good, the anthems and Smart's Te Deum being excellently rendered. In fact, the whole services reflected the highest credit upon the popular organist and choirmaster, Mr. A. J. Hawkins, who must have indeed worked hard to secure such a result. Mr. Hawkins presided at the organ at both services, and accompanied with judgment and taste. The Rev. James Wayman preached appropriate sermons both morning and evening, and the church (which was tastefully decorated) was crowded at each service. In the afternoon an excellent rendering of Gaul's cantata *Ruth*

was given to an overcrowded congregation. The soloists were Miss Emily Davies, Miss Minnie Kirton, Mrs. A. J. Hawkins, Mr. Alexander Tucker. Mr. F. J. Marchant was at the organ, Mr. Hawkins conducting. The music was greatly enjoyed by all present.

LEWISHAM.—Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held at the Lewisham Wesleyan Church, College Park, on Sunday and Monday, the 11th and 12th ult., and were well attended. At the Sunday morning service the *Te Deum* and *Jubilate* were sung to a setting in F by G. B. Allen; and the anthem was Stainer's "Ye shall dwell in the land," the bass solo being taken by Mr. H. C. Hoyles. At the evening service the anthem, by the Rev. E. V. Hall, "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem," was exceptionally well rendered, the solo being taken by Mrs. Benjamin Miller. A Flower Service, in connection with the Sunday School, was held in the afternoon. On Monday evening a special service was held, when Dr. Chipp's sacred cantata *Naomi* was rendered, the characters of Naomi, Ruth, and Orpah being taken by Mrs. Meakins, Mrs. B. Miller, and Mrs. P. Rider respectively; that of Boaz by Mr. H. C. Hoyles; while Mr. C. Richards effectively rendered that portion of the work allotted as narrative. The solos were, without exception, well sung; and the choir, numbering forty-two voices, under the direction of Mr. Benjamin Miller, rendered the choruses in a most satisfactory manner. The work was listened to with great pleasure by a large congregation, and its rendering was highly creditable to all concerned. Mr. Frank Coucher ably presided at the organ. The church was beautifully decorated.

NORTH FINCHLEY.—A Harvest Festival Service was held in the Congregational Church on the 7th ult., when the chapel was most tastefully decorated. There was a large choir, and they rendered the canticles and anthems in excellent style, under the direction of the organist. The senior minister (Rev. T. Hill) read the prayers, and the sermon was preached by the Rev. H. Barron, the newly-appointed minister at East Finchley.

STOKE NEWINGTON.—Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held in the Rectory Road Congregational Church on Sunday, September 27th. The minister, Rev. C. Fleming Williams, occupied the pulpit, and preached with much fervour and eloquence. Appropriate hymns and chants were sung, and the anthems were: Morning—"O give thanks" (Sydenham); "Te Deum in F" (Smart); "I will sing of Thy power" (Sullivan); the tenor solo being taken by Mr. J. Powell. Evening—"I will magnify Thee" (Calkin); "Ye shall dwell in the land" (Stainer); "The heavens are telling" (Haydn). After the offertory Madame Moore gave a very effective rendering of "The Reaper and the Flowers" (Cowen). In the afternoon a Service of Praise was given, the anthems being: "In humble faith" (Garrett); "O give thanks" (Elvey); "I will give thanks" (Barnby); "The heavens are telling" (Haydn). The verse parts were ably taken by a quartet—viz., Miss Adeline Skegg, Miss Decble, Mr. J. Powell, and Mr. J. F. Prichard. Solos were also contributed by Madame Watkins: "Cleansing Fires" (Gabriel); "Peace, troubled heart" (Pinsuti). Miss Maud Weeks sang with feeling "The Better Land" (Cowen); and Miss Emily F. Bodel, who possesses a well-trained contralto voice, gave an excellent rendering of "Harvest Home." The choir, numbering fifty voices, acquitted themselves well, and great praise is due to their energetic secretary, Mr. J. Stroud, who has done much to keep the members strong in numbers and united in purpose. The organ accompaniments were played by Mr. J. Closs, organist and choirmaster; and the voluntaries were given in a very creditable manner by Mr. Alex. Buchanan, assistant organist. Large congregations attended the services, the afternoon Service of Praise being so crowded that many visitors were unable to obtain

seats. The church was tastefully decorated, and on the following Monday the flowers, fruit, etc., were distributed among the poor of Hoxton.

STOKE NEWINGTON.—Harvest Festival Services were held in the Wesleyan Chapel on the 11th ult. The anthem in the morning was "He watereth the hills" (Spinney), and in the evening "Ye shall dwell in the land" (Stainer), the solo parts being very ably rendered by Mrs. Ernest A. Jay. On Monday, the 12th ult., the choir, assisted by members of the North London Choral Society and other friends, gave a very fine performance of Parts I. and II. of Haydn's *Creation*. It must be many years since the chapel was in such a crowded state, showing that something good was expected; and from the manner in which the work was received, it was evident that all must have been satisfied. The choir surpassed all expectations. The trio and chorus, "The Lord is great," went exceedingly well, and as the tenor had only taken the part at a few hours' notice it calls for exceptional praise. The soprano solos were safe in the hands of Madame Barter. Mr. W. E. Charles, who deputised for Mr. Eustace Jay, indisposed, rendered the tenor part in a very artistic manner, his interpretation of "In native worth" being a rare treat, although in some of the early numbers his voice showed signs of wear. The bass solos were taken by Mr. J. Ortner, but he was hardly equal to it. The finest performance of the evening was undoubtedly the accompaniments of Mr. Arthur Briscoe on the organ, his attention to each number showing how well he had studied his work. Mr. Ernest A. Jay, organist and choirmaster, conducted in a very able manner, and he is to be congratulated on the very fine performance. The collection reached about £20.

TOLLINGTON PARK, N.—The first Harvest Thanksgiving Service ever held in New Court Chapel took place on the evening of Wednesday, the 21st ult. It had been suggested and arranged by members of the choir, and it was evident that considerable care had been bestowed upon the decorations, which were of a simple but effective character. Suspended on high across the chapel by festoons of evergreen was a long frame, with the text, in white letters on a red ground, "God giveth us richly all things to enjoy." A wide table ran across the chapel, flanked at either end by growing stalks of maize, and this was generously loaded with gifts of fruit, vegetables, flowers, bread, cake, meal, etc., together with sixty packets of tea and a like quantity of sugar. These were all distributed to a number of poor families, much to their gratification. We subjoin the order of service:—Hymn 709, "Sing to the Lord of harvest"; prayer; hymn 42, "My God, I thank Thee" (Procter); Old Testament reading; duet, "O lovely peace!" *Judas Maccabaeus* (Handel); New Testament reading; anthem, "Ye shall dwell in the land" (Stainer); the Lord's Prayer; cornet solo, "With verdure clad," *Creation* (Haydn); anthem, "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works!" (Barnby); Pastor's address; solo, "In native worth"; chorus, "Achieved is the glorious work"; trio, "On Thee each living soul awaits"; chorus, "Achieved is the glorious work," *Creation* (Haydn); hymn 631, "O Lord of heaven and earth" (Wordsworth); Benediction; chorus, "Hallelujah," *Messiah* (Handel). The soloists were—Mrs. Rose Stanesby, Miss Mary Ball, Mr. Walter Toomer, Mr. James Blackney, and Mr. Perrin (cornet).

WEST HAM.—Mr. Fred Willey, the choirmaster of Brickfields Congregational Church, has been presented with a marble timepiece.

PROVINCIAL.

BATLEY.—A new organ has been opened in Hicks' Lane Wesleyan Chapel.

BEVERLEY.—An elaborate and very interesting Har-

vest Festival was held in the Congregational Church. The choir was increased for the occasion. Mr. J. F. Shepherd, organist of Mansfield College, Oxford, presided efficiently at the organ.

BIRKENHEAD.—The usual Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held at Hamilton Square Congregational Church on Sunday, the 4th ult., when the edifice was tastefully decorated with flowers, fruit, etc., contributed by various members of the congregation and friends. The Rev. H. Gardner, pastor of the church, preached morning and evening. The musical part of the service was of an appropriate character, including, in the evening, the anthem, "Fear not, O land" (Simper).—The annual services in connection with the London Missionary Society were held on Sunday, the 25th ult., the anthem being Sir F. A. Gore Ouseley's "From the rising of the sun."

BISHOP STORTFORD.—On the 21st ult. Mr. Minshall gave his lecture on "Congregational Psalmody," in the Congregational Church, to a very attentive audience, the pastor, the Rev. John Wood, presiding. The choir, conducted by Mr. A. S. Barrett, and accompanied by Mrs. Spencer, gave the illustrations very creditably.

CARDIFF.—The Roath Road Wesleyan Sunday-school Anniversary was held on Sunday, the 11th ult. In the afternoon a Service of Song was given, the Rev. S. J. P. Dunman presiding.—In connection with the Mutual Improvement Society belonging to the same chapel, the Rev. S. J. P. Dunman delivered his lecture, entitled "An Evening with Haydn and Mozart," on the 21st ult. There was a very good audience. During the lecture Miss Coslett sang "With verdure clad"; Miss Howell, "The Spirit Song," and "My mother bids me bind my hair"; Mr. Alfred Jenkins, "In native worth." Miss Ethel Lane played in excellent style the first movement of Mozart's 8th Sonata. Mr. A. C. Toone also rendered a violin solo (Andante, Haydn's 2nd Symphony in D, and "Allegro con spirito," Mozart's 6th Sonata).

CHEPSTOW.—On the afternoon of Sunday, the 4th ult., a parade of friendly and trade societies took place, after which the members of the various societies attended a service at the Congregational Church, in which the Revs. A. J. Davies (Baptist), N. Turner (Bible Christian), J. H. Stephens (Congregational), J. Lister (Wesleyan), took part. This is the first time such a service has been held at a Nonconformist place of worship in the town, similar services having always been previously held at the Parish Church. The Rev. J. H. Stephens gave a very earnest address to a crowded congregation, and the hymns were led by the united choirs of the four churches. Mr. W. Thomas, junr., presided at the organ, and played the following voluntaries, "Melody" (A. Berridge), "Nazareth" (Gounod), "Choristers' March" (A. Briscoe), accompanied with the cornet, by Mr. E. Williams, bandmaster of the Tidenham Band.—On Sunday, the 11th ult., Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held at the Congregational Church, when the Rev. G. Hargreaves, of Cardiff, preached to large congregations. The anthem, Dr. Garrett's, "Praise ye the Lord for His goodness," was very steadily sung by the choir. Mr. W. Thomas, junr., ably presided at the organ.

COLNE.—A new organ has been opened in the Baptist Chapel.

HALIFAX.—The first of a series of Organ Recitals was given in Square Church by Mr. B. W. Hartley.

HOLLINGWORTH.—A new organ, costing £600, has been given by Mr. Wm. S. Rhodes to the Congregational Church.

MALDON, ESSEX.—A very interesting Harvest Thanksgiving Service was held on Sunday evening, the 4th ult., at the Congregational Chapel, conducted by the Rev. H. H. Carlisle, M.A., the musical service having

been arranged by Mr. O. D. Belsham, the organist and choirmaster. Special hymns were sung at the usual service, one being "Before Jehovah's awful throne," to the *Old Hundredth*, in unison, with Calkin's organ accompaniments. After the service Dr. Garrett's "Harvest Cantata" and Woodward's "The radiant morn" were well rendered by the choir.

MONTROSE.—A new organ, by Messrs. Peter Conacher & Co., has recently been erected in the Congregational Church. On the occasion of the opening, Mr. J. M. Hutcheson, of Greenwich, gave a very interesting and instructive lecture on "The Service of Song in the House of the Lord," which was "illustrated" by musical selections. Mr. Hutcheson referred to the relative importance of praise in the ordinance of public worship, and deprecated the custom too prevalent of relegating it to a subordinate position in the sanctuary. While insisting on the necessity of musical culture in congregations, he drew attention to the danger that necessarily arises therefrom of striving after artistic effect to the sacrifice of devotional feeling. The perfect fusion of both elements was essential to the highest form of praise. In this connection the lecturer also adverted to the disuse of congregational singing—a feature which as yet was happily not characteristic to any great extent of the churches in our country. As a counteracting influence to this he strongly advocated the musical training of congregations. The position of the choir as a factor in public worship was a most important one, but its usurpation of that function could not fail to be productive of enervation in the musical efforts of the congregation.

NORTHAMPTON.—Mr. Henry Bowles, the valued organist of Commercial Street Chapel, has been appointed organist at St. Giles' Church in the same town. The finest instrument in the town is at this church. His departure is much regretted by the congregation at Commercial Street. Although himself a Churchman, having previously held the appointment at St. Sepulchre's Church, he has entered most heartily into all the Congregational movements, and speaks of his connection with Commercial Street as having been "the happiest period of his life."—A very successful Sunday-school Eisteddfod was held in Northampton on the 14th and 15th ult., in connection with the local Sunday-school Union. Prizes were offered for recitations, violin solos, pianoforte solos, and vocal solos. Sunday-school choirs and chapel choirs also competed. Mr. H. Coward, Mus. Bac., was the musical adjudicator. Mount Pleasant Sunday-school Choir won the prize in the choral competition. College Street Chapel were successful in the church choir contest, though Mount Pleasant and Kislingbury Choirs were formidable rivals. Mr. E. J. Biggs must be credited with the idea of this very useful meeting, and under his direction everything passed off well. Mr. Manfield, M.P., and Earl Compton presided.

OLDHAM.—The Choir Festival Services in Hope Chapel on the 18th ult. were of a special character. In the morning the choir sang the anthems "In humble faith" (Garrett) and "The Lord hath done" (Smart), in both of which Mrs. Wood rendered excellent service as soloist. The order of service for the afternoon engagements contained several numbers taken from the music sung at the great festival held at the Crystal Palace in June last, the choir of the church receiving valuable assistance from that of the Union Street Congregational Church. Miss Janet Nisbet (contralto) gave a pleasing rendering of Rodney's song "Sion," and Mr. Hanson (in spite of indisposition) sang "O Lord, have mercy" (*St. Paul*). He also joined Mr. Charles Walton in the duet "The Lord is a Man of war." Miss Annie Cooper and Mr. R. Wormald were associated in the fine duet

"Forsake me not" (Spohr), which they rendered with exquisite effect. Popular hymns set to familiar tunes were heartily joined in by the large congregation assembled. The pastor spoke a few words of kindly encouragement to those whose zeal and constancy do so much to maintain the efficiency of the "service of song in the house of the Lord." In the evening the spacious church was filled by a deeply interested congregation. After an opening service of praise and prayer (in which all present reverently joined), the choir, which was augmented for the occasion, sang a selection from Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang*. The soprano solo and semi-chorus "Praise thou the Lord" were given with fine effect, the solo being sung with great taste and expression by Miss Bleasby. Mr. Roscoe Wormald (the principal tenor of the choir) was heard to great advantage in the recitative and aria "Sing ye praise" and "He counteth all your sorrows," as well as in the exacting music of "The sorrows of death," the singing of which produced a marked effect upon the hearers. Mr. Wormald also joined Miss Annie Cooper in the duet "My song shall alway be," which received an admirable rendering. The duet "I waited for the Lord" was also effectively sung by Mrs. Wood and Miss Bleasby. The choruses "All men, all things," the chorale "Let all men," and the vocal accompaniment to the solo voices in the duet "I waited for the Lord" were all exceedingly well rendered, the voices being evenly balanced, and giving full evidence of the great care bestowed on their training by the able choirmaster, Mr. Charles S. Davies. Gounod's fine song "Glory to Thee" was also sung with excellent effect by Miss Annie Entwistle. A brief but most appropriate address by the pastor upon the music of our churches was followed by Somerset's anthem "There is a green hill," which appropriately closed the selection. Mr. E. C. Marland presided at the organ, and by his judicious and careful playing rendered invaluable service throughout the day. The offertories amounted to £41.

PEMBROKE DOCK.—On Thursday evening, September 24th, after the usual weekly practice, the members of the Albion Square Congregational Choir presented their secretary and assistant-choirmaster (Mr. H. Cartwright Reid) with a very nice silver-plated pickle-stand and fork, on the occasion of his marriage. Mr. Reid, who has only been connected with the choir for the past two years, has during this time won the respect and confidence of every member. The organist (Miss B. Gay, Cert. Hon. R.A.M.) made the presentation. Mr. Reid replied in a few suitable words, warmly thanking them for the nice present, which he never expected, and he hoped love and concord would ever exist in their midst.

QUORN, LEICESTERSHIRE.—On Monday, September 21st, the organ in the Baptist Chapel was reopened with a sacred concert. The choir, augmented for the occasion by friends from Loughborough and neighbourhood, rendered the following programme with commendable care: Chorus, "And the glory of the Lord" (Handel); organ solo, "Festal March" (Smart); song, "The Golden Ladder" (Miss Voce); chorus, "Gloria" (Mozart); organ solo, "Chorus of Angels" (Scotson-Clarke); chorus, "The heavens are telling" (Haydn); organ solo, "Offertoire in A" (Batiste); song, "Calvary" (Miss Lizzie Spencer, L. Mus. L.C.M.); chorus, "Et Vitam" (Haydn); organ solo, "Wait her, angels" (Handel); chorus, "Hallelujah" (Handel). Mr. R. Orson (choirmaster) ably conducted, Mr. H. H. North (organist) presided at the organ, and Mr. J. Spencer occupied the chair. The opening services were continued on the two following Sundays, the total collections amounting to over £14. The organ has had another keyboard added, four new speaking-stops, two couplers, etc., by Mr. J. Porrill, organ-builder, Leicester, and the artistic manner in which he has carried out

his work leaves nothing to be desired. The cost of these improvements and incidental expenses is about £100, towards which £65 had been already promised.

SLEAFORD.—A Nonconformist Choir Union has recently been formed for this district.

STALEYBRIDGE.—The Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held at the Wesleyan Chapel on the 11th ult. In the afternoon a service of praise was given, consisting of choruses from *Judas* (Handel) and *Twelfth Mass* (Mozart), and solos were sung by Miss Marjorie Eaton, who was specially engaged. "Pious Orgies" (Handel), "The King of Love" (Gounod), were finely sung by her, and she gave a splendid rendering of "On mighty pens" (Hadyn). Again, in the evening, Miss Eaton charmed her hearers by her fine delivery of "How blest is He," from Weber's *Jubilee Cantata*, the service concluding with "The Better Land," devotionally rendered by the same lady. There were large congregations at each service.

STREET.—The Wesleyans held a most successful Harvest Thanksgiving Service in the Crispin Hall on Sunday, the 11th ult. There was a crowded congregation. The service was of an unusually bright and attractive character, the chapel choir (under the conductorship of Mr. W. J. L. Matthews) being supplemented by the town string band. The Rev. W. P. Ellis, the newly-appointed circuit minister, conducted the service, which commenced with an instrumental march, "Sadowa," nicely rendered by the band. Special festival hymns were used for the occasion, and the choir sang two anthems: "Ye shall dwell in the land," and "O Lord, how manifold." A most appropriate sermon was preached by the Rev. Mr. Ellis. At the conclusion of the service the band played the "Hallelujah Chorus." The spacious hall was most tastefully and effectively decorated.

TROWBRIDGE.—On Sunday, September 20th, Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held at the Tabernacle Congregational Church. The pulpit and communion platform were tastefully decorated with offerings of fruit, flowers, and vegetables, afterwards distributed to the poor of the congregation. Sermons were preached in aid of the "Wilts and East Somerset Congregational Union," by the pastor, the Rev. T. Mann (Hon. Sec. of the Union for over fifty years). Encouraged by the reception of a musical service given last winter, the musical part was specially arranged. The *Te Deum* (Hopkins) was very heartily sung by the congregation in the morning service. The anthem (by the choir) was "Praise the Lord, O my soul," by M. Watson. The evening service opened with the hymn, "Now thank we all our God," to *Wittemburg*, the second verse being sung in unison, with free organ accompaniment. The duet, "O lovely peace," was sung by Miss C. Allan and Miss Haden, the voices blending and keeping well together. The anthem, "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem," went very well, the tenor solo being well rendered by Mr. Lord, and the whole congregation joined in the Doxology, in unison, to the accompaniment of the full organ. After the sermon, Barnby's "Harvest-tide Thanksgiving" was sung; but the congregation not having sung it for some years, did not join heartily. The service was most devotionally concluded by Stainer's "Sevenfold Amen," sung unaccompanied by the choir. The service was much appreciated by all sections of the congregation. Mr. A. Millington presided at the organ, and accompanied with good feeling and variety. The voluntaries were "With verdure clad," the "Marvellous Work," and the "Hallelujah" (*Messiah*).

TUNBRIDGE WELLS.—Mr. F. H. Brackett has resigned the post of organist of Mount Pleasant Congregational Church.

WARLEY, NEAR HALIFAX.—On Sunday, September

27th, Harvest and Choir Services were held in the Congregational Church. The communion, choir-pews, and organ were beautifully decorated with fruit, flowers, etc. In the morning special harvest hymns were sung, "The Swiss Morning Hymn" and the anthem "The earth is the Lord's" (Monk) being excellently rendered by the choir. In the evening a service of song cantata, entitled *Seedtime and Harvest*, was given in a very praiseworthy manner by the choir, the solos in the service being admirably sung by Misses Clara Mitchell, M. Bedford, G. H. Turner, Alice Sutcliffe, Messrs. W. Coates and L. Stevenson. Mr. T. Sutcliffe accompanied on the organ, the connective readings being given by Mr. R. S. Thomas, of Halifax.

Correspondence.

(*We shall be glad to receive communications from any of our readers on questions likely to be of general interest.*)

A HAPPY FAMILY.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

DEAR SIR,—While reading your reports of the too frequent cases of friction between choirs and "the powers that be," it occurred to me that a view of the reverse side of the picture might be interesting to your numerous readers, and might also help to demonstrate that it is not at all impossible for choirs and church officials to work harmoniously together.

I have held my present appointment for somewhere near ten years, and I am happy to say that during all that time there has not been the slightest shadow of discord betwixt choir and either minister or deacons.

We manage it this way. With respect to the selection of hymns, the hymn immediately before and the one after the sermon are chosen by the minister: all the others for morning service are selected by myself, and those for evening—which is a "forward movement" service, and for which we have a string band and considerably augmented choir—by the choirmaster, who is also conductor at this service. We find this arrangement to work admirably.

The minister or deacons never interfere with the working of the choir, they seem to have perfect confidence, both in the officials and also in each individual member, and they never miss any opportunity of expressing their indebtedness to us. It is no unusual thing for a deacon to step into the choir after service to thank us for the excellent manner in which the music has been rendered, and to say how much he has enjoyed it. This is as it should be.

We carefully avoid anything like choir performances, always bearing in mind that the choir exists for the more efficient worship of Almighty God, rather than for mere personal gratification; at the same time, we believe that the cultured and beautiful in music are more acceptable to Him than the coarse and inferior, and our selections are made, as far as practicable, accordingly.

The choir, which averages twenty-five to thirty members, is organised on the usual lines. We have president (the minister), vice-president, choirmaster, who is a deacon (this is a splendid idea where practicable), secretary, and two librarians. We have a set of rules, a copy of which is given to each member on joining the choir; we keep a register of attendance. In addition to the usual practices we have a quarterly business meeting of the choir, at which all new members are admitted. At this meeting all members who have not put in the required number of attendances are called upon to give a reason for their non-compliance with the rule. This works excellently in keeping up the attendance, and when occasion demands it is cheer-

fully and loyally observed by the senior members as an example to the juniors. Of course, it is carried out with great consideration for the feelings of those concerned.

You will gather from all this that our choir is not by any means looked down upon by either the church officials or the congregation. On the other hand, I believe it is held in the highest estimation by both, and it numbers among its members the sons and daughters of gentlemen of the highest standing and position in the town.

Of course, it would be too much to expect that we should be entirely free from the cantankerous element, but this is in a hopeless minority; and, on the other hand, we have amongst us many good, earnest Christian men and women, who are always ready to make any sacrifice for the cause which they have so dearly at heart; and to this is to be attributed, in a great measure, our success.

Yours faithfully,
WM. HAWCROFT,
Organist, Masborough Chapel (Independent), Yorks.

THE NONCONFORMIST CHOIR UNION.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

DEAR SIR,—I quite agree with Mr. Storr that we want more variety in our Crystal Palace programme, and I think his idea to gradually work up an orchestra in connection with the Union is a step in the right direction. Certainly it means very much work and organisation; but if some competent friend of the Union could be persuaded to take up the matter, the results would be of great service. Almost all the large choruses that sing on the Handel Orchestra are now accompanied by a band: and why should the N. C. U. be behind-hand? I am convinced this is the direction in which the committee should now concentrate their energies.

Yours truly,
A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL.

Reviews.

The Inchcape Bell. Cantata for Female Voices. By Joseph W. G. Hathaway. (D'Alton & Co., 28, Newman Street, W. 2s. net.)—A well-written and interesting cantata.

Praise the Lord, O My Soul. Festival Anthem. By Arthur Briscoe. (Osborn & Co., 61, Berners Street, W. 3d.)—An exceedingly bold and vigorous anthem by the popular organist of Dalston Congregational Church. The melodious solo and trio, as middle movements, give the necessary contrast to make it effective.

There were Shepherds. Anthem for Christmas. By G. E. Lyle, organist of Sherborne Abbey. A four-page anthem. Exceedingly simple, and specially suited to village choirs.

The Organist's Quarterly Journal, Part XCII., contains five pieces of various length, the most popular being "Introduction and Variations on St. George." For Harvest Festival Services next year this will probably be a very favourite out-voluntary.

Lord, Thou art become Gracious. Anthem for Tenor, Solo, and Chorus. By J. P. W. Goodwin. (Novello & Co. 3d.)—A very melodious and useful anthem composed by a Nonconformist organist, and dedicated to Mr. Albert Spicer. The tenor solo, with chorus accompaniment, is very pretty.

The Childe of Elle. Traditional Ballad for Solo, Chorus, and Orchestra. By Erskine Allon. (The London Music Publishing Co., 7, Great Marlborough Street, W. Vocal score, 1s. 6d. net.)—Mr. Allon has scored a distinct success in his setting of this old ballad. Some of the numbers—more especially the choruses—are

exceedingly good. The work is not easy, but choral societies will be interested in rehearsing and performing it.

Eglantine. A Summer Idyl for the Pianoforte. 3s.

Country Sketches. Six Short Pieces for the Pianoforte. By Charles Darnton. (St. Cecilia Music Publishing Co., 182, Wardour Street, W. 4s.)—The first of these compositions is especially adapted for teaching purposes. It contains variety of style. The *Sketches* comprise a pastoral, mazurka, minuet, gavotte, and march. No. 1 is exceedingly simple, the other pieces gradually increasing in difficulty. They are all pleasing.

Pièces D'Orgue. By R. Bassall. (Laudy & Co., 139, Oxford Street, W.)—Six numbers are before us, three of which are written on three staves. No. 1 (Fanfare) and No. 5 (Andantino) are the most popular, though all are good in their way.

The Student's Musical History. By Henry Davey. (J. Curwen & Sons, 8 and 9, Warwick Lane, E.C. 1s.)—Mr. Davey has succeeded admirably in giving an interesting, and for all practical purposes a complete, history in a very concise form. Every student should have this little volume by his side. In the last chapter the author gives "the straight tip" to our leading living composers.

Anthems of Praise. No. 1, "Hosanna to the Son of David." By Charles Darnton. (J. Curwen & Sons. 1d.)—We understand in this new series of anthems the publishers intend to issue quite simple compositions, suitable for small choirs or congregational use. No. 1 is a good start. Though easy, it is bold and telling.

We have received from Messrs. A. and G. Pinfold, of Cleckheaton, one of their new and very ingenious metronomes. Choirmasters will find them exceedingly useful and perfectly accurate. They are neatly got up, and are cheap, and are likely, therefore, to supersede the old-fashioned metronomes.

To Correspondents.

R. F. S.—It is published in America. Words and music, 2s.

T. S.—"Organs, Organists, and Choirs" (E. Minshall) is published by Curwen & Sons. Price 1s. 6d.

F. J.—We should advise you to take pianoforte lessons at first. You can go to the organ afterwards.

W. B.—You will find it among Novello's Octavo Anthems.

L. D. W.—The shape of your church seems rather peculiar. It is impossible to advise you as to the position for the new organ without further information.

C. H.—Groves' "Dictionary of Music" is published by Macmillan.

The following are thanked for their letters:—J. T. S. (Chester); F. W. L. (Chepstow); E. A. F. (Durham); J. M. (Cardiff); V. P. (Perth); W. A. (Inverness); S. D. (Liscard); W. J. F. (Peckham); A. H. (Islington); N. O. R. (Deal); J. A. D. (Nuneaton).

Staccato Notes.

THE BOROUGH OF HACKNEY CHORAL ASSOCIATION, which for many years, under the able conductorship of Mr. Prout, was one of the best Metropolitan societies, has ceased to exist.

THE EXETER HALL SATURDAY evening organ recitals have commenced again. There is a rumour (we hope

it is true) that oratorio will ere long be heard once more in this hall.

THE renowned Crystal Palace concerts were resumed on the 10th ult.

A SACRED Music Congress is to be held in Milan on the 10th inst. A Congress of Organ-builders and Organists is shortly to be held at Vienna.

THE BIRMINGHAM FESTIVAL was a brilliant success, in spite of the unfortunate illness of Madame Albani. The new works performed were Dr. Mackenzie's cantata *Veni Creator*, Professor Stanford's oratorio *Eden* (an excellent work), and Dr. Dvorak's *Requiem*, all of which were well received. The chorus-singing was simply magnificent throughout. It is probable the profit of the festival will amount to over £4,000.

HENRY RUSSELL, the composer of "Cheer, boys, cheer," "A life on the ocean wave," and many other songs, appeared at the Promenade Concert recently. The old man (he is over eighty years of age) was enthusiastically received by the audience.

A MUSICAL scholarship is to be founded in memory of Madame Jenny Lind-Goldschmidt.

MR. H. F. FROST, organist of the Savoy Chapel Royal, and Mr. C. S. Jekyll, of St. James's Palace, have resigned.

Elijah, or another oratorio, is given every Thursday evening in Marylebone Parish Church.

MR. JOHN NORTH, of Huddersfield, well known as an adjudicator at choral competitions, is dead.

Lauda Sion, Hymn of Praise, Song of Miriam, and *Creation* were given in the Assembly Hall, Mile End, in connection with the Harvest Thanksgiving.

DR. W. A. BARRETT, editor of *The Musical Times*, died suddenly on the 17th ult. He was well known as a critic, author, and lecturer.

Accidentals.

ROSSINI was conducting a lady to the piano, who had been announced to sing a *cavatina* from his *Semiramide* at a reunion of aristocratic amateurs, when the bashful lady whispered: "Oh, dear maestro, you have no idea how I tremble. Just think—to sing your music. I am frightened to death!"

"So am I, madame," was the response of Rossini.

EPITAPH on an orchestra leader:—

"He has been beating time, they say,
For more than ten years past;
But now Old Time has won the day,
And beaten him at last."

"OWING to the warm weather," announced the minister, "service will not be held this evening. We will close with the hymn, 'From Greenland's icy mountains.'"

YOUNG GUSHER (who has been listening to Moore's melodies, sung by Miss Sharpe): "Lovely! Exquisite! Don't you love the Irish airs?"

MISS SHARPE: "Oh, I dole on them."

YOUNG GUSHER: "Aren't you partial to the Irish airs, Mrs. Sharpe?"

MRS. SHARPE: "Yes, very—excepting when they are put on by the cook."

MISS MINOR (after the concert): "Fraulein Sprauler plays with a great deal of expression; but what do you think of her technique?"

MISS GREENING: "I didn't notice that she wore one."